3: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

siderable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the younger towards the older group. This was to some extent mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of importance, called in for consultations with the adults who were cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went with them to market when beasts were sold. These older boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones' with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle, skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal. Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leadership among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until everyone agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they conducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about